

PADSTOW URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.



ANNUAL REPORT.

of

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Year ending 31st December 1950.

STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health.

John Reed. M.B. Ch.B. B.Sc. D.P.H.

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.

A.F.Buller. A.R.S.I.

Mr.Chairman and Councillors,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for 1950. The report for 1949 stressed the urgency of the two major problems confronting the Council i.e. housing and water supplies. In both these items little material progress was made. The decision to erect houses of prefabricated type may see some acceleration of the housing progress. The final scheme for improving the water supply rests essentially with the Ministry who have the alternatives of a local supply and the De Lank scheme to consider.

The vital statistics show an increase in the birth rate and a decrease in the death rate, but little significance can be attached to these owing to the small numbers involved.

I wish to express my thanks to Mr.Buller, for his co-operation at all times, and for various items of information included in the report.

1. STATISTICS.

General Statistics.

Estimated Mid-Year Population.1950.	2,560.
Area in Acres.	3,343.
Number of Inhabited Houses.	869.
Rateable Value.	£20,605.
Value of Penny Rate.	£84.

Vital Statistics.

Live Births.

TABLE I.

Number of Registered Live Births during 1950.

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate.	23	16	39
Illegitimate.	-	1	1
	<u>23</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>40</u>

Birth Rate per 1,000 population = 15.6

Birth Rate England & Wales per 1,000 population = 15.8


One female stillbirth was recorded and one female death occurred within one month of birth. The cause of this infant death was attributed to congenital atelectasis.

Deaths.

TABLE II.

Number of Registered Deaths during 1950.

Male.	Female.	Total.
9	14	23



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Crude Death Rate per 1,000 population = 9.0

Crude Death Rate England & Wales per 1,000 population = 11.6

TABLE 111.

Age Distribution at Death.

	Male.	Female.	Total.
0 - 1 month.	-	1	1
1 month - 30 years.	-	-	-
31 - 60 years.	3	1	4
61 - 70 years.	2	3	5
71 - 80 years.	5	5	10
81 - 90 years.	2	1	3
	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>23</u>

TABLE 1V.

Chief Causes.

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Diseases of Heart.	3	5	8
Diseases of Intracranial Vessels	3	3	3
Diseases of Respiratory System (excluding tuberculosis)	2	1	3
Diabetes.	-	1	1
Cancer.	1	1	2
Respiratory Tuberculosis.	-	-	-
Diseases of Digestive System.	-	-	-
Nephritis.	1	-	1
Others.	2	3	5
	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>23</u>

11. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

Hospital and Maternity Accommodation.

There were no changes in hospital accommodation during 1950. There is still a considerable need for nearer maternity accommodation, available at present only at Redruth. The addition of a Consultant Gynaecological and Ante-Natal clinic in Wadebridge was a considerable improvement, and the volume of work has more than justified its establishment.

County Council Services.

The transport of the sick to hospitals was continued both by County owned vehicles and by voluntary services. The service met its obligations without complaint during the year. Nursing, Health Visiting and Midwifery were conducted by two District Nurses, both of whom were qualified to administer Gas and Air Analgesia. They continued to hold their ante-natal clinic fortnightly in the Forresters' Hall.

The Infant Welfare Centre was well attended at its fortnightly sessions, the average attendance being:- 25.54. Vaccination was performed successfully on 40 children and 65 received a full course of diphtheria prophylactic. The progress of immunisation calls for some comment, since a more careful scrutiny of the town's record in this direction proves to be discouraging. There has been a steady decline in the proportion of protected children, particularly marked during 1950.

The children born in 1949, 46 in number, became eligible for inoculation in 1950, and only 18 of these received a full course, giving a percentage of 39. Corresponding figures for the children of the years 1946, 1947 and 1948 were 75%, 64%, 55% protected. One may ask whether this is not the beginning of a complacent attitude in the public towards diphtheria, similar to that now adopted in relation to smallpox and vaccination, accelerated by the adverse publicity given to the possible association between inoculation and infantile paralysis. Diphtheria, when it now occurs, has not changed in severity, and the public may yet receive a sharp reminder of its capabilities.

School Health Services.

There were no changes made in the school premises during the year. Much overcrowding existed, which may have been reflected in the large number of cases of whooping cough which occurred in the school. The proportion of children of poor general condition was extremely low, as was the number of defects observed on routine examination. Milk and Canteen services were well maintained during the year.

111. PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notified Infectious Diseases 1950.

Whooping Cough	8
Scarlet Fever.	1
Polio-myelitis. (Paralytic)	2
Measles.	1
Food Poisoning.	1

The cases recorded above were all notified in the second half of the year. It would appear that some co-operation from practitioners was achieved in securing information on the prevalence of infectious diseases following the Council's letter in May. It does not of course give a true representation of the extent of infectious diseases, since many cases do not attend the doctors, nor are all infectious diseases notifiable. Other sources of information suggest that over 40 cases of whooping cough occurred amongst school children alone, that there was an extensive outbreak of mumps, and a minor one of food poisoning. The probable organism in this instance was *Salmonella Typhimurium* which was also widely distributed throughout the surrounding Rural District. A few individual cases of diarrhoea on investigation were found to be due to Sonne Dysentery.

Two cases of polio-myelitis were reported, one occurring in a visitor and most probably infected at home. The source of the other infection would appear to have been from a visiting relative who had developed 'flu' at home previous to her visit to Palstow. There was no direct connection between the cases, and no secondary cases were reported.

Tuberculosis.TABLE V

	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		TOTAL.
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	
Cases at 31.12.49.	6	3	2	2	13
New Cases notified during 1950.	4	1	-	-	5
Transferred to Urban District.	-	-	-	-	-
Total Entries.	10	4	2	2	18
Deaths.	-	-	1	-	1
Discharges.	-	-	-	1	1
Transfers to other Districts.	1	2	-	-	3
Remaining Cases at 31.12.50.	9	2	1	1	13

The small numbers involved in this problem provide no significant material for argument, but it is worth noting that nine of the total pulmonary cases live in premises which fall into the category "Unfit for human habitation". The Council is directly responsible for this aspect of the control of tuberculosis, and the failure to implement a single recommendation for the rehousing of some of the worst cases cannot be viewed with much satisfaction. It is hoped that every effort will be made to increase the rate of re-housing, and that further consideration may be given to these distressing cases.

IV. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.Water Supplies.

Regular sampling of the town's water supply was commenced during 1950. The results confirm the impression gained that the water from the gathering grounds, which during normal use was untreated, would show considerable variation in bacteriological content. Twenty five samples were submitted for bacteriological investigation. The majority showed the presence of coliform organisms, most probably from the soil, whilst 9 contained *Bacillus Coli*, excremental organisms, most probably of animal origin. Under the circumstances, although human pollution is unlikely to occur at the gathering grounds, it was considered that treatment of the water passing to supply should be carried out continuously. Sampling during the present year has given far better results.

The distressing problem of quantity is still a major concern to the Council, and shortages were again experienced during the year. The shortage does not only affect the general public, but also the Royal Naval Air Station, whose supply immediately ceases in times of drought. The Station has then to turn to a source which is most inadequate and unreliable. The Council's efforts to provide an impounding reservoir at Trelow Downs made little material progress during the year, hampered I am sure by the alternative supply, the De Lank Scheme, which also progresses at an almost negligible rate. Whatever scheme is finally determined by the Ministry, it is essential in the general interest of the inhabitants of the Urban District, and the Royal Naval Air Station, that the water supply should be improved without undue delay.

A single extension of mains was carried out during the year to supply the hamlet of Crugmeer. There is still a small group of houses at Hawkers Cove, consisting of 15 cottages without a piped water supply, their present arrangements being most inadequate.

TABLE VI.

Water Samples & Results Submitted during 1950.

Date.	Report Number.	Probable Coliform. Organisms.	Probable Bacillus Coli.
3.2.50.	50/647	160	8
10.2.50.	50/774	160	1
20.2.50.	50/950	-	-
8.3.50.	50/1299	3	1
15.3.50.	50/1433	-	-
30.3.50.	50/1745	1	-
19.4.50.	50/2079	-	-
22.5.50.	50/2674	3	1
7.6.50.	50/234	-	-
20.7.50.	50/1112	1	-
26.7.50.	50/1224	-	-
26.7.50.	50/1225	160	7
2.8.50.	50/1364	3	-
9.8.50.	50/1464	5	-
16.8.50.	50/1559	17	1
23.8.50.	50/1637	35	25
30.8.50.	50/1779	3	-
11.9.50.	50/1992	5	1
18.10.50.	50/2494	-	-
25.10.50.	50/2599	1	-
1.11.50.	50/2706	25	1
15.11.50.	50/2872	5	-
29.11.50.	50/3049	1	-
13.12.50.	50/3183	1	-
20.12.50.	50/3266	-	-

Sewerage.

The Council resolved to prepare a scheme of sewerage and sewage disposal, the work of the preparation of this scheme has been held up pending the decision of the County Planning Authority on the population estimates and the zoning of the land required to provide for the estimated population of 1970. This has since the end of the year been agreed upon and a start has been made in the preparation of maps showing the existing system of old semi-circular brick sewers and the more recent pipe sewers. A scheme is rendered urgent by reason of the laying out of a large building estate as married quarters for the Royal Naval Air Station, H.M.S. Vulture, which is served by a combined drainage system for 70 houses already erected and further extensions are contemplated. Since the admission of this sewage to the system flooding has been experienced.

No major schemes of sewage or sewer extensions have been carried out during the year.

Refuse Collection.

During the year the refuse dump at Green Lane which had been in use for some years and held under licence from the Prileaux-Brune Estate was closed down. In the absence of any suitable dump the domestic refuse had to be lumped and covered with earth in close proximity to the built up area.

This naturally resulted in some complaint, whilst the work of dumping was in progress. However, Town and Country Planning approval was sought and obtained to utilise the Credis Mine area. This consists of a disused iron mine, which should provide space for tipping for some considerable time to come. The standard of collection was not improved during the year, both household containers and collecting vehicle being much below the desired standard. The Council resolved to purchase and operate a more suitable vehicle and when this is implemented a more satisfactory service can be organised.

V. FOOD AND DRUGS.

Thirty five inspections were made in relation to food and food preparing premises. The following items were disposed of as unfit for human consumption at the request of retailers:- 271 lbs of imported beef and ox liver. 342 lbs of fish and considerable quantities of canned foods.

The County's inspectors submitted 15 samples of milk and 13 samples of other food stuffs for analysis. No cases of adulteration were detected.

Milk.

The unsatisfactory process of distributing milk previously pasteurised in cans still continues, with the result that the advantages of pasteurisation are likely to be lost. There is of course no procedure by which this can be modified, other than persuasion. Bottling is likely to become compulsory in 1954 and we shall have to wait patiently for this final improvement to be secured, and the appropriate designation used.

Six samples of milk were submitted for statutory tests during 1950, and one was found to be sub-standard.

Ice-Cream.

Four additional registrations were made for the sale of ice-cream during the year. No samples were submitted for examination.

Food Poisoning.

One case of food poisoning was notified during the year, the causative organism being identified as *Salmonella Typhimurium*.

VI. FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

The 19 factories on the Council's register were not visited during the year. No complaints were made by H.M. Inspector of Factories.

VII. HOUSING.

A report was submitted during the year showing that of 68 houses inspected 57 would fall into the category of unfit for human habitation, and that the most suitable way to deal with them would be by Clearance Order. Until the Council can rehouse the occupants of these miserable premises such action is not possible, and in the meantime further deterioration is likely to occur.

The rehousing programme has been exceptionally slow. At the end of the year, 1950, ten houses of the 1948 allocation were completed, making a total of 22 post war houses in all. It is possible now that the Council have favoured the non-traditional type house that more progress will be made, but it seems certain that many of the difficult housing problems and many of the 70 applicants on the Council's housing list will have some considerable time to wait before a solution is found.

I beg to remain,

Your Obedient Servant,

JOHN REED.

Medical Officer of Health.